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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/892,457	06/28/2001	Kenichi Sameshima	010825	2154

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ARMSTRONG, WESTERMAN & HATTORI, LLP
1725 K STREET, NW.
SUITE 1000
WASHINGTON, DC 20006

EXAMINER

SHOSHO, CALLIE E

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1714

DATE MAILED: 11/06/2002

4

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/892,457

Applicant(s)

SAMESHIMA ET AL.

Examiner

Callie E. Shosho

Art Unit

1714

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-9 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-9 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on ____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 3.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). ____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other:

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

1. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

2. Claims 1-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claims 1, 5, and 7-9 each recite “resol-type phenol resin”. The scope of each of the claims is confusing because it is not clear what is meant by “type”. What resins are encompassed by this phrase? The addition of the word “type” extends the scope of the claims so as to render them indefinite since it is unclear what “type” is intended to convey. The addition of the word “type” to the otherwise definite expression renders the definite expression indefinite by extending its scope. *Ex parte Copenhaver*, 109 USPQ 118 (Bd. App. 1955).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

4. Claims 1-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Gerber (U.S. 5,294,649).

Gerber discloses composition comprising phenolic resole, powdered or granulated magnesium oxide or magnesium hydroxide, and ammonium thiosulfate. The composition is hardened or cured at 15-49 °C and can also be thermally cured either before or after the hardening at 77-100 °C. The magnesium oxide or magnesium hydroxide and ammonium thiosulfate are present, based on amount of resole, in amounts of 5-40% and 0.01-5%, respectively, which overlap the amounts presently claimed (col.1, lines 19-22, col.5, lines 45-55 and 61-66, col.6, lines 34-35, col.7, lines 60-64, col.9, line 51, col.11, lines 56-59, col.12, lines 45-46 and 53, and col.14, lines 53-57).

In light of the above, it is clear that Gerber anticipates the present claims.

5. Claims 1-3 and 7-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Engen et al. (U.S. 5,551,961).

Engen et al., discloses composition comprising resole phenolic resin, catalyst which is calcium hydroxide, magnesium hydroxide, or barium hydroxide, and co-catalyst which is ammonium thiosulfate. The composition is cured at 50-150 °C (col.7, line 39, col.8, lines 36-49, col.12, lines 4-6 and 15, and col.18, lines 30-33).

In light of the above, it is clear that Engen et al. anticipate the present claims.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

6. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

7. This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

8. Claims 1-6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cooper (U.S. 2,869,194) in view of Meyer (U.S. 4,264,760).

Cooper discloses phenol-formaldehyde composition comprising 64-94.4% resole and 5-36% powdered magnesium oxide (col.1, lines 15-16, col.3, lines 53-63, col.5, lines 43-46, and Table 2). From instant claim 5, it is calculated that the present composition comprises 0.99-99% resole, 0.86-99% alkali earth metal oxide or hydroxide, and 0.0009-13% salt. Thus, the amounts of resole and magnesium oxide disclosed by Cooper fall within the presently claimed range.

The difference between Cooper and the present claimed invention is the requirement in the claims of ammonium thiosulfate.

Meyer disclose the use of 0.3-30% ammonium thiosulfate with phenol-formaldehyde in order to reduce the release and odor of formaldehyde while producing composition with optimum properties (col.1, lines 8-18, col.3, lines 5-10, 32-33, and 45-47, and col.4, lines 1-5).

In light of the motivation for using ammonium thiosulfate disclosed by Meyer as described above, it therefore would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to use ammonium thiosulfate in composition of Cooper in order to reduce the release and odor of formaldehyde while producing composition with optimum properties, and thereby arrive at the claimed invention.

9. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Ikeda et al. (U.S. 5,336,723) disclose phenolic resin molding composition comprising resole and magnesium hydroxide.


Gupta et al. (U.S. 4,785,040) disclose phenolic resin molding composition comprising resole and alkaline earth hydroxide or oxide.

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10. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Callie E. Shosho whose telephone number is 703-305-0208. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday (6:30-4:00) Alternate Fridays Off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Vasu Jagannathan can be reached on 703-306-2777. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-872-9310 for regular communications and 703-872-9311 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-0661.


Callie E. Shosho
Examiner
Art Unit 1714

CS
November 1, 2002